

ELDERSHIP ESSENTIALS

By Jason Hilburn

SYNONYMS FOR THE SAME OFFICE

(From three Greek words—*presbuteros, episkopos, poimano*)

Elders (*most common term in the Bible*) = **bishops** = **overseers** = **shepherds** = **pastors**

They could also be called rulers: “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls...” (Heb. 13:17; cf. Heb. 13:7; 1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).

OFFICE	SCRIPTURES
BISHOPS = ELDERS	“...ordain <u>elders</u> in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a <u>bishop</u> must be blameless...” (Titus 1:5-7; cf. 1 Tim. 3:1-7; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).
ELDERS = OVERSEERS	“And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the <u>elders</u> of the church...the Holy Ghost hath made you <u>overseers</u> ...” (Acts 20:17, 28).
OVERSEERS = SHEPHERDS	“...take heed to...all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you <u>overseers</u> , to <u>shepherd</u> the church...” (Acts 20:28 NKJV; cf. 1 Pet. 2:25).
SHEPHERDS = PASTORS	The Greek root in “ <u>feed/shepherd</u> ” (<i>poimano</i>) in Acts 20:28 and 1 Peter 5:2 is from the same root in “ <u>pastors</u> ” (<i>poimen</i>) (Eph. 4:11). <i>Poimen</i> is most often translated as “shepherd(s)”. The word “pastors” is related to the word “pasture,” indicating elders overseeing the flock (1 Pet. 5:1-4).

OTHER INFORMATION

ALWAYS A PLURALITY OF THESE MEN mentioned over each congregation—
never one man as “the pastor” over a congregation.

“...they had ordained them elders [plural, JPH] in every church [singular, JPH]...”
(Acts 14:23; cf. Acts 15:22; 20:17, 28; Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:5; Heb. 13:7, 17; James 5:14).

NOT THE SAME AS AN EVANGELIST, who is mentioned separately:

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers”
(Eph. 4:11).

MUST MEET GOD’S REQUIREMENTS (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-11; 1 Pet. 5:1-3).